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Apostle Islands National Lakeshore News Release

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Tourism to Apostle Islands National Lakeshore creates \$54 million in Economic Benefits

Report shows visitor spending supports 702 jobs in local economy

BAYFIELD, WI – A new National Park Service (NPS) report shows that 290,060 visitors to Apostle Islands National Lakeshore in 2014 spent \$44 million in communities near the park. That spending supported 702 jobs in the local area and had a cumulative benefit to the local economy of \$53.8 million.

“Apostle Islands National Lakeshore is proud to welcome visitors from across the country and around the world,” said Superintendent Bob Krumenaker. “We are delighted to share the story of this place and the experiences it provides and to use the park as a way to introduce our visitors to this part of the country and all that it offers. National park tourism is a significant driver in the national economy, returning \$10 for every \$1 invested in the National Park Service, and it’s a big factor in our local economy as well. We appreciate the partnership and support of our neighbors and are glad to be able to give back by helping to sustain local communities.”

In 2014, Apostle Islands National Lakeshore had record levels of visitation, mainly due to the 138,000 visitors that came to see the Apostle Islands Ice Caves during the winter, normally the park’s quiet season. David Eades, Bayfield Chamber of Commerce and Visitor Bureau Executive Director, estimates that the ice caves alone gave the area an estimated \$10-12 million boost. “The sheer number of visitors to the ice caves has certainly been a boon to the local economy,” Eades stated. “While some of the visitors were familiar with the area already, many of them were not and expressed interest in returning to see the caves during the summer months. We met visitors from all over the nation, and the world, who came specifically to experience the natural beauty of the park. The ice cave events have increased awareness of what Bayfield has to offer, in any season. The Apostle Islands National Lakeshore is a fundamental part of what makes Bayfield special and we are grateful for the services that the park provides”.

Superintendent Krumenaker added that, “Due to the amenities of our area, such as quality restaurants and Bed and Breakfasts, the economic impact of Apostle Islands National Lakeshore was similar to much larger, better known, and more heavily visited parks, such as Mount Rainier, Mammoth Cave and Crater Lake National Parks.”

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The peer-reviewed visitor spending analysis was conducted by U.S. Geological Survey economists Catherine Cullinane Thomas and Christopher Huber and Lynne Koontz for the National Park Service. The report shows \$15.7 billion of direct spending by 292.8 million park visitors in communities within 60 miles of a national park. This spending supported 277,000 jobs nationally, with 235,600 jobs found in these gateway communities, and had a cumulative benefit to the U.S. economy of \$29.7 billion.

According to the 2014 report, most park visitor spending was for lodging (30.6 percent) followed by food and beverages (20.3 percent), gas and oil (11.9 percent), admissions and fees (10.2 percent) and souvenirs and other expenses (9.9 percent).

To download the report visit <http://www.nature.nps.gov/socialscience/economics.cfm>

The report includes information for visitor spending at individual parks and by state.

To learn more about national parks in Wisconsin and how the National Park Service works with Wisconsin communities to help preserve local history, conserve the environment, and provide outdoor recreation, go to www.nps.gov/wisconsin.

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